1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

The leader's effectiveness as a speaker is likely to prove a measure of his success. When he repeatedly fails to convince his followers of the necessity of the actions he counsels, his control simply dissolves: 622 554 [537]

The leader has to be a good man, a good talker. He takes charge of things. He always has much to say. When anything is pending, he is asked about it, and he gives his opinion. What he says is respected, and his advice is usually followed. His directions are followed when the men are at war. In case of a murder he advises what to do about it. If more than one local group is involved, the leaders have a meeting and decide what to do with the murderer. [627] [682]

The leader generally gets on a hill or a high place and gives advice to the people. He does this every day or sometimes just once in two or three days if there is nothing much to report. When there is a great deal of sickness in the camps, the leader may ask some shaman to hold a ceremony for the people. [755]

Except for the greater respect paid to him and the fact that everyone likes him, the leader is treated like anyone else in the group. If the leader gets too old, he just drops out; another man is put in his place. Then he stays home and doesn't try to go out and direct things. If they have any dispute over the leader, if it gets so that a good many don't trust him, they just get a new leader in his place. The one who has been leader is just a common member of the group after that.

As the last quotation suggests, the authority of the leader is far from absolute; his position is little stronger than that of an adviser of excellent reputation:

A man called "leader" is respected all right. N. was a leader when I was young. If what N. advised when he was leader was in line with what the others considered their best interests, they followed him. The minute his ideas ran counter to those of the people he was directing, his ideas were not followed. He never had absolute control. No man would do what he said just because he said it. People always listened closely to what he said; they gave his words more attention than they gave to those of some ordinary man, but they didn't have to accept everything he said.

The word "leader" carries the idea of director or commander. It does give you the idea that the directions are to be obeyed. But in actual life this is not always true. We use the same word ["he leads, commands, directs"] when a man is giving directions at a ceremony or about a piece of work.

Consequently, the head man's rank is assured only as long as his direction is effective:

When the leader gets old, he may call the people together and say to them, "I have been your leader for a long time, and I am becoming old and feeble, even of mind. I want you to choose another who can do for you what I once did."